/189 cont./

b) Maturity

881 Today no rites or ceremonies for the youths take place any
[178] more. In former times they were led to the sacred lagoon of Juan
[778] Tama or to the heights of Cuetando, and there they had to build a hut and lay out a small cornfield as proof of their capabilities as a man and father of a household (Hernandez, 1944, p. 203).

[582] A girl comes of age with puberty, that is to say, she may
[836] marry. Before that and before marriage, intercourse is not per-
[535] mitted. On the occasion of the first menstruation in former times a special dance was performed (itsa-kó), during which the young girl was bathed naked in chicha in a pit outside the festival house
881 (Castillo i Orosco, p. 85). Today this no longer takes place;
285 rather, a girl, when she goes to the dúyat for the first time at
787 about 15 years of age, takes along agave fibers and during the
[178] approximately five days that she stays there plaits a very pretty,
[262] small fiber bag (yáhaleckwe) about the size of a fist. There are no additional food prohibitions or similar things. After that she goes to a distant river to bathe. On the way there she lets the bag fall. A married man passing by lets it lie, for he knows that it belongs to a young girl. A young man, however, who happens to be coming that way sees the beautifully worked bag, picks it up, and uses it as a small money-bag. Without knowing who made the little bag, he will -- people are convinced -- marry this girl.

/190/

c) Marriage

595 The present form of marriage of the Paez is monogamy.
114 H. Pittier de Fábrega (p. 314), however, concludes from their traditions that the Paez were formerly polygamous and were converted to monogamy only through education on the part of the missionaries. I could find no clue in their mythology for actual
595 polygamy in former times. The social structure and way of life
591 of the Paez, however, prohibits living alone for unmarried girls.
[589] In case they have no relatives or do not find lodging in the house of relatives, another man takes them into his family. The girl

2: Pittier de Fábrega E-4, 5 (1906) 1907
SC15 Paez SC15

147 the odor peculiar to the Indians, which becomes quite noticeable when they are sweating and which so closely resembles that of the secretion of the so-called *sahino*, or wild hog (*Dicotyles tajacu* L.), that I have more than once been deceived into believing that our trail crossed the path of a drove of these animals.

516 When at rest the Paez men almost invariably sit on their heels, the toes sustaining the whole weight of the body, while the women sit with their legs stretched together on the ground,
[514] even when near the fire in their houses. In micturition young
481 girls remain standing. The gait of both men and women is short-paced and easy, the body being always slightly inclined forward, probably on account of the habit of carrying heavy loads.

824 Like all children of Nature, the Paez Indians are very keen
826 observers of their surroundings, as is shown by the minuteness of their differentiation in plants and in certain groups of insects. Castillo, for instance, gives the names of no fewer than six different varieties of ants —

[552]

kan-kik	*cĭ-kik-ne*	*cĭa-i*
kik-finis	*gune-kandi*	*te-fiti*

and I collected very few plants for which they did not have a ready name.

Reproduction and Death

● 881 When a girl reached puberty the event was celebrated among the old Paez Indians by a special dance called *itsa-ko*, during which the young naked female was placed in a hole dug outside the hall-house and thoroughly washed with *chicha*. We have no
836 notice of pre-marital liberty being conceded to women, nor of the relation of children to parents in the family organization. As
595 tradition has it, the pre-conquest Paez were polygamous, and notwithstanding the efforts of the missionaries, it is almost certain that this practice has not completely disappeared. We know nothing about the existence of marriage ceremonies before
581 the introduction of the Catholic ritual. It is likely, however,
[586] that marriages were endogamous and free, and, as such, a very frail institution, as Castillo informs us that even in his time

?:Hernández de Alba E-5 ✓ (no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
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The *Páez* family is completely under the authority of the father, whose wife and children obey him implicitly and may be punished by him. Nonetheless, the father must obtain his wife's permission to sell or exchange goods she produced, such as bags for coca, sashes, etc. Precise etiquette is maintained between fathers and godfathers (compadres). Whenever a man meets his father or his godfather, he must kneel to receive his blessing. The fathers and godfathers must embrace whenever they meet. In one case a young man was the godfather of his father's new son by another wife, so that in meeting his father the young man had to kneel bareheaded, and then stand with his hat on and embrace his father as a godparent. The father did not call him "son" but "compadre."

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—A very old custom among these peoples is that at childbirth the mother should retire to a special house or go to the mountains. If she was delivered in the home, she and the baby were bathed, and then the family left the hut and built a new one elsewhere.

Today both the *Moguex* and *Páez* have a special hut for childbirth. The day after the child is born, the mother is placed in a hole up to her head and bathed with an infusion of leaves of "moquita," after which she washes the clothes and objects worn during delivery. She then returns to work and lives again at home. In the special hut, a *Páez* woman is assisted in childbirth by another woman, or, as a last resort, by her husband, who must bathe immediately afterward. Two days later, the mother circumcises her son or destroys the virginity of her daughter. Four or five days after the birth and after the first bath, the father takes the child to the sacristan of the community for baptism with water, and then returns it to the mother. The afterbirth must be buried or burned at the place of the birth. About 15 days later, the mother takes a bath and washes her child and her clothes and objects, and returns home. Later, the child is baptized with oil in the church by the priest with the godparents present. This is an occasion for general dancing and drunkenness.

Puberty.—At puberty a girl was formerly taken by her parents to a hill, placed in a hole, and bathed. Each Indian then took her a gift. Pittier de Fábrega (1907) notes that at a later period a girl's puberty was celebrated with the "Itsa-kó" dance, the girl, bathed with chicha, remaining in the hole. Today, a woman must retire during her menstrual periods to a special hut, where other women bring her food and build a fire to warm her. Afterward, she bathes, washes her clothes and objects, and then returns home.

Men, until recently, underwent a sort of initiation, in which they were taken to the shores of the sacred lagoon of Juan Tama or to the

7:Hernández de Alba E-5)(no date) 1948 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex

heights of Cuetando, where they built a hut and planted a miniature field as proof of their masculine aptitude.

Education.—Today the Indians are educated principally by their parents in the customs and tasks pertaining to each sex. Some boys and a few girls are sent to the few missionary schools, where they are given religious instruction and are taught Spanish, arithmetic, geography, the history of Colombia, and modern embroidery or light basketwork. The *Páez* are reluctant to send their daughters to the schools because they feel that women should keep the traditions of their people. The missionary schools strive to change the native language and the cultural traditions which have given the Indian community social cohesion.

Marriage.[11]—Formerly polygyny was prevalent, but now Catholicism has imposed monogamy. The Indians continue, however, to practice trial marriage (amaño). A marriage is arranged as follows:

The bride is selected by the young man's parents or by himself. His parents and two witnesses or godparents then visit her house to request her for the groom. They also serve as advisors to the young woman, in case she disapproves the marriage. The visitors carry half-filled bottles of rum (aguardiente) and some special garments for the girl. The young man's father offers the girl's father a half-bottle, acceptance of which means, as usual among the *Páez*, that the second party is well disposed toward the proposal and the negotiations may proceed. If the girl's mother agrees, the boy's mother presents her a half-bottle of liquor. The godfather or witness gives another half-bottle to the girl's father and the godmother gives one to the mother. The visitors now leave, taking the girl, who then begins a year of trial marriage, during which the young man seeks proof that the girl is able to bear children, is active, cooks well, can weave, and can cultivate the land. After the trial period, the man may return the girl to her parents or they marry in the Catholic Church, holding a feast which, like all such celebrations, is called a "cuido." The couple and their parents and godparents are accompanied by an orchestra (chirimía) to the house where the feast is to be held. Here the bride puts on a modern dress, a ribbon on her hair, necklaces, and earrings, while the groom is with his godfather. As the guests arrive, chicha is distributed frequently, music is played, and then there is a feast of thick soup, generally with chicken, cooked yuca, arracacha, and roast or baked meat. In the afternoon, after more music and chicha drinking, the "refresco," really a banquet or social communion, is served. Six bottles of wine made from cane molasses, cinnamon, and cloves, and cake are given to the bride, groom, godmother, and godfather, who give some to everyone present. A prayer, led by the head of the house, then asks the souls of the dead to bless the marriage and give permission to dance. First, the godfather dances with the bride, then the godmother with the groom, after which everyone dances. The feast lasts 5 days, depending on the wealth of the family. Chicha is served and accepted with the phrase, "May God pay you, compadrito, for accompanying us. Accompany us more."

Death.—At a death, the family formerly buried the deceased inside the house with his possessions, and abandoned it. Some communities, however, preferred to cremate the body or dry it over the fire. The

[11] I thank my wife and companion, Helena Ospina de Hernández, for her research in 1938 on matrimonial matters.